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20 August 1963

PROBLEMS RELATING TO THE NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE ORGANIZATION PLAN AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH THE NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE AND THE DNRO.

This memorandum for the record outlines the questions raised by DCI concerning the above subjects.

I. BASIC OBJECTIVES

The basic purposes of the agreement dated March 13, 1963 should be recognized as the creation of a management organization to handle the NRO under the following broad understanding expressed in the Agreement.

Maximum use will be made of appropriate technical and operational capabilities and resources of the DoD, NSA and CIA to support all collection and processing projects (III-A).

Appropriate capabilities, facilities and resources of the DoD and the CIA will be used on all flights over denied territory (III-D).

Appropriate resources of DoD, CIA and private contractors should be used in the planning and conduct of research and development of future reconnaissance programs (III-H).

The DNRO is granted authority to carry out the National Reconnaissance Program through the assignment of all project tasks such as technical management, contracting, etc., to appropriate elements of DoD and CIA (IV-C).

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It was DCI's understanding that NRO would be a managing and planning organization utilizing existing resources but would not attempt to become a line organization duplicating existing resources, most particularly those in the Air Force and CIA. However, NRO has become a "line organization" and as a result has taken over operational responsibility. The Air Force Systems Command (General Schriever) is no longer involved and General Greer reports directly to the DNRO. Thus the NRP has lost the input of this organization. Similarly the Satellite Operations Center has been made an NRO staff activity rather than a CIA operation functioning under NRO direction.

Consideration should be given to directing NRO to revert to the original concept covered in the Agreement which assigns to it responsibility to plan, manage, budget and administer the reconnaissance program utilizing available resources of DoD, CIA, NSA, contractors, etc. for performance of the effort. Except for the reference in I-B, "will establish as a separate operating agency", the basic Agreement on the NRP deals exclusively in the language of management and planning.

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II. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD.

Guidance to the DNRO shall be furnished by SecDef as Executive Agent and by the USIB (II-D), and the plans developed shall respond directly and solely to the intelligence collection requirements and priorities established by the USIB.

USIB's requirements are developed by its Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance (COMOR), composed of representatives of the Services, DIA, CIA, etc. USIB regularly reviews and passes upon COMOR's requirements.

A recent communication to DCI from DNRO dated August 12th (withdrawn August 19th) evidences a lack of understanding by NRO of the above fundamental responsibility of USIB in the field of reconnaissance.

The responsibility of DNRO to the intelligence requirements as defined by USIB should be clearly understood.

III. RELATIONSHIP OF DNRO TO SECDEF AND DCI.

The Director of NRO is charged with the responsibility of keeping designated personnel in DoD and CIA personally informed on a regular basis concerning the status of projects of the NRP so that such individuals may in turn inform the SecDef and DCI concerning these activities (V-A-1). All departments are charged with the responsibility of providing support to the DNRO through the assignment of personnel, etc.

For several months General Carter has been acting for the DCI on NRO matters. It has been concluded that all such activities will be centered within CIA with the Deputy Director for Science and Technology, Dr. Wheelon, who will be responsible to the DCI, Deputy DCI and the CIA Policy Planning Group.

NOTE: Clarification of the type of National Reconnaissance Organization contemplated by the agreement and adherence thereto now existent would solve many of the problems.

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1. Basically NRO's functions can be divided into the following general categories of activity, each of which involves planning, management, budgeting and control of activities to be assigned to agencies equipped to carry on the work directly or through contractors:

a. Research and development of improved or advanced reconnaissance systems.

b. Procurement, manufacture and testing of approved vehicles or systems.

c. Technical direction and operations control of developed systems or vehicles.

With reference to specific projects, the following problems warrant immediate resolution:

The U-2 program. To meet our needs in Cuba high resolution cameras are needed for the U-2. The adaptation of a satellite camera now coming into being will improve resolution by 50% or more. Appropriate arrangements should be made to install and test the camera and, if successful, sufficient planes should be equipped for utilization in Cuba and perhaps elsewhere. CIA is now planning the camera installation in a test plane in early September.

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2. The OXCART program.

This includes the OXCART (A-12), the WEDLOCK (5 reconnaissance vehicles, two of which will be modified for TAGBOARD), KEDLOCK (3 long-range interceptors), the R-12 (reconnaissance bomber version), and TAGBOARD (the OXCART drone).

None of these programs will succeed unless the OXCART is brought up to dependable, satisfactory operation at specification, speed and altitude and this must be done without interruption. Because of the large number of projects at Lockheed under diverse management and Lockheed's understandable desire to give preference to the planes offering the greatest potential business, there has been evidence of conflicts, confusion, diversion of personnel, engines, equipment, etc. between the various projects.

It was agreed in a meeting with the President's Scientific Advisory Board, Secretary McNamara and DCI, and the President, on 21 January 1963 that procurement of the military versions of the OXCART would be handled by CIA under "black purchasing procedures." This has been done but management control of the projects after the contracts have been let is confused.

3. It is recognized that the Air Force has a very important technical input into all military vehicles, CIA a technical input to the A-12.

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It is therefore proposed that a CIA representative serve as the Managing Agent for all work at Lockheed, that this responsibility extend to placement of contracts, management of contracts, control of schedules and priorities and the adjudication of problems which arise in the plant and at the test site.

The Air Force Systems Command or other Air Force units will assign technical personnel necessary to insure that the contractor meets their technical requirements for the military vehicle (not the A-12). A system must be developed to accommodate technical changes, orders or additions, proper handling of change order contracts, extras, and reimbursement and proper accountability therefore.

A related problem is the purchase of spare parts and supplies for the OXCART vehicle and the military counterparts. This should be handled through the above contract procedures with the Air Force specifying their requirements for the military vehicles.

The above procedure will be reviewed when the A-12 vehicles have been delivered and the total Lockheed production is devoted to Air Force planes. There should be no delay in TAGBOARD. The unresolved question of the disposition of 5 Air Force A-12s (WEDLOCK), two of which are to be modified to handle TAGBOARD should be resolved and appropriate instructions issued.

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5. Technical direction and operational control of the U-2s used for reconnaissance over denied territory (except for Cuba) and the OXCART will be carried on by CIA in accordance with the programs of the NRO designed to meet the requirements of USIB. Support for these operations will be supplied by the Air Force as in the past.

6. Satellite Vehicles:

All satellite vehicles are considered as part of Project A under the responsibility of General Greer. This should remain unchanged. Satellite Operations Control Center should be moved back into CIA because of the availability of necessary computers for mission planning (which are now employed with the information transmitted by Telex to the Pentagon), and also because of the close relationship with COMOR which is of vital importance in planning missions.

7. Responsibility for satellite payloads for ARGON, CORONA, and LANYARD, including contracting and budgeting, security and technical direction to be carried on by CIA who have been responsible for these developments. Similarly responsibility for GAMBIT will be carried on by the Air Force in the appropriate command, all under the direction of the DNRO.

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8. A schedule of satellite launchings of the various types of payloads available and for as far in the future as is possible should be developed by DNRO and submitted to USIB for approval. Deviation from approved schedules should be reported on a current basis.

Recognizing that the budget implications of satellite launchings are most serious, there should be frequent consultation between the DNRO and DCI in the preparation of launching schedules with the attendant budget implications to insure that the schedules as finally submitted by DNRO for incorporation in the National Reconnaissance Plan will meet the general requirements laid down by USIB.

9. Photographic Processing Research and Development; Film Procurement and Photographic Processing should be assigned by DNRO to the operating agencies in parallel to their respective responsibilities for "payloads". Note - Problems which have arisen through the duplication of contracts for Photographic Process R&D between General Greer and CIA should be adjudicated. It should be recognized that both CIA and the Air Force, directly or through their respective contractors, can make an important contribution in the field of satellite photography, film improvement, photographic processing, etc., and arrangements must be worked out, as a matter of policy and to be consistent with the basic NRO agreement, to "make maximum use of technical and operational capabilities of both".

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10. The Aircraft Operational Center located in CIA and used for planning U-2 flights and other penetrations of denied territory except for Cuba [] missions, should remain centered in CIA where it has been for the past 8 years. The Cuban overflights [] should be handled by JRC under DNRO guidance and in accordance with agreed procedures.

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11. Future Developments:

An important area for which no plans are existent is the handling of future developments of a type which will have a very important bearing on our reconnaissance capability in the years ahead. This area of activity can not be left unattended. The areas for consideration are:

a. Development of a satellite and an aircraft infrared capability, night photographic capability, and color photographic capability.

b. The implementation of the Purcell report involving recommendations concerning the improvements of the CORONA system (now under study by both CIA and Gen. Greer), the development of a 60-inch lens camera for high resolution satellite photography and certain other new developments such as faster films and image intensification.

c. Satellite vulnerability which was a problem discussed at the Special Group early this year with a report requested from the Air Force.

d. [] - Subject discussed with the Special Group early this year but no specific action taken.

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It is my intention to attempt to convene the Purcell Panel during the week of September 9th for the purpose of further reviewing their report and recommendations and seeking their advice on the adequacy or steps either taken or planned by NRO to accomplish the improvements recommended by them.

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